

Remarks

The claims have been amended to correct certain typographical errors as well as to simplify the claim structure and distinguish more clearly over the art cited.

More particularly, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the identifying characteristic is checked as it is being inputted “and without user intervention” (i.e., without user actuation of the select button) for conformance with one or more check criteria. Claim 1 has been further amended to recite that upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria, a selection facility is enabled for actuation by the user to transmit the identifying characteristic to an identifying characteristic processing device; the selection facility remains disabled until the inputted identifying characteristic meets the check criteria. Finally, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the identifying characteristic is transmitted to the identifying characteristic processing device “upon enablement of the selection facility and actuation of the selection facility by the user to transmit the identifying characteristic to the device”.

Claim 2 has been amended to recite that the user is notified during input as to whether “the selection facility has been enabled”. Claims 3 and 11 have been cancelled as their limitations are now substantially contained in claim 1 as amended. Claim 12, dependent on cancelled claim 11, has been amended to depend on claim 1.

Claim 13, formerly dependent on claim 1, has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 17. In addition to containing the limitations of claims 1 and 13 as previously presented, claim 17 also recites (as does claim 1) that the checking step is performed without user intervention. New claim 18 is a program storage device claim similar to claim 14, but dependent on claim 17.

Device claims 6 and 7 have been amended in a manner similar to that of method claims 1 and 2, while device claims 8 and 15 have been cancelled for reasons similar to that of claims 3 and 11. Claim 9 has been amended to correct a minor typographical error. Finally, new claim 19 carries forward the recitations of previously presented claims 6 and 16.

Turning first to claims 1 and 6 and the claims dependent thereon, they are believed to distinguish patentably over Limsico U.S. Patent 5,793,952 by virtue of their recitations that the identifying characteristic is checked as it is being inputted “without user intervention”, that the user selection facility is enabled “upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria”, having been previously disabled, and that the identifying characteristic is transmitted to the identifying characteristic processing device “upon enablement of the selection facility and actuation of the selection of the user to transmit the identifying characteristic to the device”.

The contrast with Limsico is quite clear. In applicants’ claimed system, the user is assured that he has correctly entered data before he causes it to be transmitted to another device. In the system of the cited patent, checking of the new password is not even initiated until after the password has been fully entered a first time and the user has actuated the Set button 150 (Fig. 1) at step 5130 (Fig. 5A). Limsico thus does not check the new password “as it is being inputted” or “without user intervention” as claimed by applicants. Even if one construes the phrase “as it is being inputted” broadly, as the Examiner apparently does (paper no. 8, pages 5-6), the necessity in Limsico to actuate the Set button 150 to initiate the checking steps clearly negates the possibility that the checking is done “without user intervention”. If actuating the Set button 150 is not user intervention, it is hard to imagine what is.

Furthermore, Limsico’s “selection facility”, Set button 150, is enabled whenever the Password Changer window 110 (Fig. 1) is active. It is not enabled “upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria”, nor does it remain disabled until the inputted identifying characteristic meets such criteria, as claimed by applicants.

Turning now to new claims 17-19, these claims are believed to distinguish patentably over Limsico by virtue of their recitation that the checking step is performed “without user intervention” and that the identifying characteristic is transmitted “without user intervention” upon inputting of an identifying characteristic meeting the check criteria. In Limsico, by contrast, even if the transmitting step is performed “without user intervention”, as the Examiner apparently contends (paper no. 8, pages 4-5), the checking step is certainly not, since it requires just such user intervention by actuating the Set button 150 or 230.

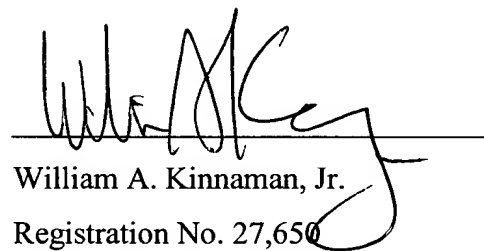
Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1 and 6 as amended and the claims dependent thereon, together with new claims 17-19, are believed to distinguish patentably over the Limsico patent cited by the Examiner. Entry of this amendment and reconsideration of the application as amended are respectfully requested. It is hoped that upon such consideration, the Examiner will hold all claims allowable and pass the case to issue at an early date. Such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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